

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in the application. The Examiner has rejected claims 1-12.

The Examiner has objected the language and format of the Abstract. The Abstract has been amended to have at least 50 words. Withdrawal of this objection is requested.

Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Maeda et al. (US Patent No. 5,341,441).

Maeda is directed in detail to the encoding of data using VQ data, with decoding mentioned only in passing. The text referred to in Maeda actually indicates that Maeda is not performing the process or using the decoder as claimed in the instant invention. As discussed in Applicants' specification on page 8, line 25 through page 10, line 16, it is apparent that the combination of VQ decoding combined with color space processing results in a decoding code book 18 that is different from the encoding codebook 12. The text in Maeda specifically states that the codebook used for decoding is the same as that used for encoding, and therefore it does not disclose decoding and color space processing in combination.

This is further discussed with regard to Maeda, Figure 9, at column 13, lines 25-34. Referring to Figure 1 of Maeda, 21 is referred to initially as the image output unit. In the text in column 13, it is shown that the image output unit 21 is also the color converter. Therefore, the VQ decoding and color transformation (conversion) are not done in combination as one process, but use two different functions 20 and 21 in Maeda.

Amended claim 1 requires that the decoding and color space processing be done in combination as a single process. For the reasons discussed above, this is not shown, taught nor suggested by the prior art. It is therefore submitted that claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over the prior art and allowance of this claim is requested.

Claims 2-10 depend from claim 1 and should be ruled allowable for that reason and for their own merits. Claim 2 provides the limitation that the color space processing is half-toning. The text referred to is as column 20, lines 20-44. However, this text refers to a method of multi-stage VQ encoding and does not address half-toning. With regard to claim 3, the prior art does not show that the color transformation is being done in combination with the VQ decoding. With regard to claims 4

and 9, as discussed above, Maeda does not address half-toning and therefore cannot address color space processing as being a combination of half-toning and color transformation, or that the VQ decoding footprint is a subset of a halftone footprint. With regard to claims 5 and, Maeda does not address decoding and color space processing an input image, much less that the input image is encoded in luminance-chrominance color space, or using a codebook that is not a power of 2. With regards to claims 6 and 7, Maeda does not address the combination of VQ decoding and color space processing, much less that the color space processing is either RGB or CMYK.

It is therefore submitted that claims 2-10 are patentably distinguishable over the prior art and allowance of these claims is requested.

Claims 11 and 12 have been amended to more clearly state that the invention as claimed is directed to the combination of VQ decoding and color space processing in combination as a single process. As discussed above, this is not shown, taught nor suggested by the prior art. It is therefore submitted that claims 11 and 12 are patentably distinguishable over the prior art and allowance of these claims is requested.

The prior art made of record and not relied has been reviewed and is not considered pertinent to Applicants' disclosure. No new matter has been added by this amendment. Allowance of all claims is requested. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at (503) 222-3613 if it appears that an interview would be helpful in advancing the case.

Respectfully submitted,

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